

Chapter 8 – Quarters

Introduction

Quarters are approved housing units supplied by the Service to its employees, contractors, volunteers and others. Station managers may acquire or keep quarters to house employees that are essential to providing after-hours service or protection. They may also provide quarters when there is an inadequate supply of suitable private housing within a reasonable commuting area. Regional directors, Regional quarter officers, and station managers are responsible for their quarter facilities and operations.

POLICY

The role of
Regional directors

The Regional director has the responsibility for the Quarters Management Program. It includes the following:

- Reviews completed *Justification for New or Replacement Quarters, DI Form 1871* (see Appendix 5, 142) and recommends the Assistant Director – Business Management and Operations' (ABMO) approval.
- Approves *Certification of Required Occupancy, DI Form 1872* (see Appendix 5, 142).
- Reviews the Regional Quarters Maintenance Management Program annually to ensure correction of any program deficiencies.
- Reviews all expenditures for the Regional quarters account to ensure the utilization of funds from the account are authorized by public law.
- Reviews employees grievances involving required occupancy of quarters
- May transfer quarters account funds among stations within the program to ensure that the highest priorities are addressed

POLICY

The role of
Regional quarters
officers

The Regional quarters officers are located in each Regional office and are the initial contact for station managers and tenants to assist with questions and problems. The officer must:

- Send the *Quarters Inventory* to the applicable station manager for all new or replacement quarters. The inventory is maintained by NBC.
- Review *Requests for Reconsideration* of rental rates and make the final determination of facts for the Service relating to comparable rent data. Ensure that all requests for Reconsideration are supported by at least three comparable rentals.
- Grant or disallow deductions and charges based upon the documentation provided by the station managers.
- Screen the Quarters database for quarters which have been vacant for more than three years. Stations should use chronically vacant quarters for other purposes or recommend disposal. Quarters used for other purposes must provide justification prior to renewal as utilization for quarters.
- Prepare the annual *Rental Adjustment* (accessible for downloading from the NBC database) and make available to the station manager if applicable.

POLICY

The role of station
manager

The station manager has the following duties:

- Assigns available quarters in accordance with Chapter 8 of 400 DM. All tenants, including volunteers and non-Service employees must be given an *Assignment Agreements DI Form 1881*. See Appendix 5, 142.

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- Reports the names and dates of all tenant changes.
 - Initiates *Quarters Justification DI Form 1871* (see Appendix 5, 142) and *Certification of Required Occupancy DI Form 1872* (see Appendix 5, 142). The completed forms are sent to the Regional quarters officer for screening and include a recommendation for approval or rejection.
 - Notifies the servicing personnel office of any position that requires an employee to live in quarters.
 - Delivers all notices of *Rental Adjustment DI Form 1882* (see Appendix 5, 142) to all paying tenants as soon as the forms are provided by the Regional quarters officer. Ensures that the applicable forms are signed by the tenant and the station manager and returned to the Region.
 - Ensures that the documentation for deductions for lack of amenities, loss of privacy, excess or inadequate size, excess heating and cooling costs and poor conditions are submitted annually.
 - Ensures that any quarters maintenance project in excess of \$1000 is documented on a maintenance work order. This form must include a description of the project, Quarters number, dates started and completed, project cost, material cost, contractor, and/or staff hours expended.
 - Assures that quarters are kept in decent, safe and sanitary condition. He/She may spend any balance in their stations' Quarter's account for quarter operations and maintenance.
 - Provide an updated inventory, tenant data, and deduction determination to the Regional quarters officer before the annual rent adjustment occurs in March.
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GUIDANCE

Who lives in
Service provided
quarters

The conditions for required occupancy are:

- The occupant will provide after-hours services, or protection of Service property or resources.
 - There is a lack of available suitable housing which includes remoteness and scarcity during periods of high housing demands caused by a tourist season or harvest season. Local hires do not qualify for required occupancy based on a lack of suitable housing.
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GUIDANCE

Volunteers living in
Service provided
quarters

Volunteers may live in Service provided quarters. However, all quarters used to house volunteers must be justified with the *Quarters Justification, DI Form 1871*. The Station Manager may set a rent anywhere from \$0 up to market value for volunteers. The rent should be no less than the fair market rent of the quarters less the market value of the services provided by the volunteer. The Consumer Price Index-adjusted base rental rate of the quarters may be used as an indication of the local market rent.

GUIDANCE

The role of tenant
who occupies
Service provided
quarters

Tenants must:

- Certify annually in writing that any bedroom or any other room that is claimed as not being used is locked, not accessible to the tenant and not used for any personal purpose.
 - Provide a list of family members, giving names, ages and gender if claiming inadequate size or that not all rooms are used.
 - If a claim for a deduction for loss of privacy is made, a log of the date, time and nature of repeated public visits or calls during non-duty hours must be submitted annually to the Regional quarters officer by November 30.
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GUIDANCE
Tenant and rental
rate issues

All Service quarters, as well as quarters for most other Federal civilian agencies, have the base rent set by an Interdepartmental Regional Survey process. This process consists of gathering information for comparable rentals in four housing categories in established communities closest to concentrations of quarters in the survey area and statistically analyzing them to derive rent formulas.

If the tenant believes that the rental rates in the survey area are significantly higher than the local rates of housing comparable to the unit, he/she may file a written Request for Reconsideration regarding the rent. A tenant has the right to request a reconsideration of rental rates when he/she believes that the quarters have been improperly classified by an erroneous factual determination or that the rental rates have not been established within the guidelines. Appeal rights are provided in the General Terms and Conditions shown on the reverse side of *DI Form 1881*.